

CAP NATIONAL COMMANDER ADDRESSES SAFETY



OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER HEADQUARTERS, CIVIL AIR PATROL United States Air Force Auxiliary

20 Aug 02

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL CIVIL AIR PATROL MEMBERS

FROM: HQ CAP/CC

SUBJECT: NATIONAL COMMANDER'S "SIGHTS ON SAFETY" (S.O.S) PROGRAM

I consider your health and welfare to be of great importance. Most of you have trained hard over the years in order to become proficient in your special field of volunteerism. You have become an important part of our capacity to provide public service. If you are injured, an important part of our team is missing, and unless the injury was caused by some unpreventable event, then our safety program has failed. I want us to have a mind-set about safety that so pervades our lives that safety is a part of our very culture, indeed a part of our self-essence.

Our organization, and I in particular, place great faith and confidence in our Wing Commanders. Show them the problem, and give them the space and latitude to fix it. I recently reviewed a long list containing information about CAP mishaps which have shown an alarming trend toward chance events. These accidents/incidents have resulted in injury and death to several of our members as well as loss or significant damage to our assets. This must end. Such events as running out of fuel, taxiing into stationary objects, and striking hangars must stop. In the last two months we've experienced three major aircraft accidents per month and we've already had one this month. Ten major aircraft accidents this year resulting in six deaths and two serious injuries. This must be fixed.

Region and Wing Commanders alike are the National Commander's special arms which reach out across our vast organization to nurture, lead and protect our members. While I believe my Region and Wing Commanders are my very special Safety Officers, my friends we must ALL take charge of our own safety. We must also take an ownership interest in the safety of our brothers and sisters in our valuable public service.

To that end I am sounding the alarm. My "Sights on Safety" Program is the first shot, and I am calling on my Wing Commanders to take the lead NOW in devising special emphasis safety programs which cross the entire spectrum of our activities and which reach broadly across our entire membership. Because we are looking for innovative, new approaches, I will not direct you in how it will be done but it must be done. Your programs need to be effective, comprehensive and pervasive throughout the full range of your activities. An S.O.S. Program is mandatory for Wings, and encouraged, but optional for Squadrons.

While I know that a successful program is adequate reward in and of itself, prior to next summer's board meeting every Wing program will be judged by a committee comprised of the Region Commanders, and chaired by the National Commander or Vice Commander. The Wing with the best overall S.O.S Program will receive a cash grant of \$5,000, second place will receive \$3,000 and third place will receive \$2,000. These prizes will not only help defray some of the costs incurred by the Wing, but will constitute a reward for jobs well done.

While I mentioned earlier that Squadrons are not mandated to prepare S.O.S. Programs, for those that do, there will be a competition for first, second and third place. Winners will receive grants of \$2,000, \$1,000 and \$500, respectively.

I implore all of you — KEEP YOUR "SIGHTS ON SAFETY." We need to STOP CAP's alarming accident/incident trend TODAY! With your help I am confident we can make that happen.

Richard L. Bowling
RICHARD L. BOWLING
Brigadier General, CAP
Commander